

VANDERBURGH

DIAMOND VILLA



1. PROPERTY INFORMATION

Subdivision: Diamond Villa

City: Evansville

Streets: E. Negley Avenue, N. New York Avenue, N. Kerth Avenue, Negley Place, Negley Court, N. Fares Avenue, Joan Place, Joan Avenue, Joan Court, N. Harlan Avenue



Disclaimer: The following historic district example has been determined eligible based on the registration requirements set out in the Multiple Property Document Form, Residential Planning and Development in Indiana, 1940-1973. These surveys are reconnaissance level. Boundaries are preliminary and may be revised upon receipt of additional information.

2. HOUSING STOCK

No. of Units: 185

Construction Date(s): c. 1944

Primary Styles/Forms: Side-gabled Duplex

Secondary Styles/Forms: Prefabricated

Stories: 1

Garages: Prefabricated carports

Porches: Front stoops

Common Original Material(s):

Wood windows; Asphalt shingle-clad roofs

Common Alterations:

Installation of vinyl and aluminum siding; Replacement of windows and doors with vinyl counterparts

Other Details/Additional Narrative:

Housing units in Diamond Villa are “demountable” prefabricated buildings originally intended to serve a temporary need. The majority of units are side-gabled duplexes situated on piers and sheltered beneath asphalt shingle-clad roofs. A handful of American Small Houses are scattered throughout the development. Each of the duplexes originally featured a central entry flanked to either side by paired window units. While many units retain this configuration, the windows on some units have been boarded over and others have had the openings converted to a picture window. Most units are presently clad in vinyl or aluminum siding, and most buildings exhibit vinyl replacement windows; many are sheltered beneath aluminum slat awnings.

3. DESIGN AND LAYOUT

Street Plan: Grid with cul-de-sacs

Associated Non-residential Elements: Originally featured an administration building, later converted to a recreation building, and now demolished

Landscaping Features: N/A

Lot Shape: Rectangular; Triangular

Setback: Uniform

Curbs: None

Utilities: Front Yard

Street lights: Yes/metal

Sidewalks: Yes (remnants)/Concrete

Other Details/Additional Narrative:

Diamond Villa is a small enclave of housing surrounded by light industrial development to the north and south, railroad tracks and light commercial development to the east, and residential development to the west. Numerous lots to the north and south of Joan Avenue are now vacant, occupied by parking lots associated with the businesses along East Diamond Avenue, to the south. Diamond Villa is a locally significant example of a World War II – Era Housing Development/Tract Development within the MPDF. Diamond Villa was established on a grid arrangement, conforming to street network of the 1920s residential development to the west. Two dead-end streets—Negley Place and Negley Court—end in cul-de-sacs, originally abutting the local administration office of the Public Housing Authority, which fronted Joan Avenue to the south. The development was originally finished with concrete sidewalks and featured open front lawns. Presently, only remnants of the sidewalks remain in isolated locations and several properties have front lawns that are enclosed with chain-link fencing. Demolition has resulted in several vacant lots, particularly along Joan Avenue, which also now is dominated by commercial and industrial development and associated features (e.g., surface parking lots).

4. HISTORY/SIGNIFICANCE

Original Plat: Diamond Villa, April 1954

Addition(s): N/A

Developer(s): Public Housing Administration

Architect(s): --

Builder(s): --

Engineer(s): Sam Biggerstaff and Leo V. Weiss,
Engineer Associates

**Landscape
Architect(s):** --

Narrative:

Diamond Villa is a locally significant example of Tract Development / World War II-Era Housing Development within the MPDF Residential Planning & Development in Indiana. Its repetitive houses were mass-produced by Gunnison Corporation, and its tightly planned linear grid are highly characteristic of the tract type. Potential criteria and areas of significance: A/community planning & development, military.

Evansville was a critical manufacturing and distribution center for war materiel during World War II, including LST ships, P-47 fighters, munitions of various kinds, and a variety of other products. During World War II, the U.S. government established temporary communities throughout the country in an effort to provide temporary low-rent housing for workers and veterans in critical defense and industrial centers. In Evansville, such projects included Dixie Manor, Gatewood Gardens, Parkholme, Fulton Square, Mill Terrace (African American housing), and Diamond Villa. Only Fulton Square and Diamond Villa remain.

Developed in 1944, Diamond Villa is a community of demountable—prefabricated buildings that could be deconstructed and moved when no longer necessary—duplexes, with approximately 185 units originally housed in 90 buildings; the buildings were moved to Evansville from Kingsford Heights in LaPorte, Indiana and located across Diamond Avenue from the Chrysler Ordnance Plant. The local office of the Public Housing Authority also was located within the development.

Like all temporary housing, Diamond Villa was intended to be vacated within two years of the war's end. However, occupancy of the units remained high (97% occupancy as of September 1945), and Evansville continued to suffer from a housing shortage into the post-war period. As such, the city petitioned to take ownership of Diamond Villa and maintain the housing. In 1947, the property was transferred from the federal government to the Evansville Housing Authority.

The local housing authority retained ownership of the properties into the 1950s, and a community park was developed. In 1952, calls were made against the housing authority, which was cited by Diamond Villa's tenants for negligence in completing necessary property maintenance. Perhaps prompted by citizen concern, efforts were initiated to transfer Diamond Villa to private ownership. In 1954, all units in the community were put up for sale, and the area was recorded as a plat, for private sale. The administration building was converted to a recreation building for the benefit of the community in 1956.

5. PHOTO KEY AND ADDITIONAL PHOTOGRAPHS





Photo 1: Streetscape view of Negley Avenue from N. New York Avenue, facing northeast



Photo 2: Streetscape view of Negley Place, facing south



Photo 3: Streetscape view of Joan Avenue, facing west

VANDERBURGH

HEBRON MEADOW

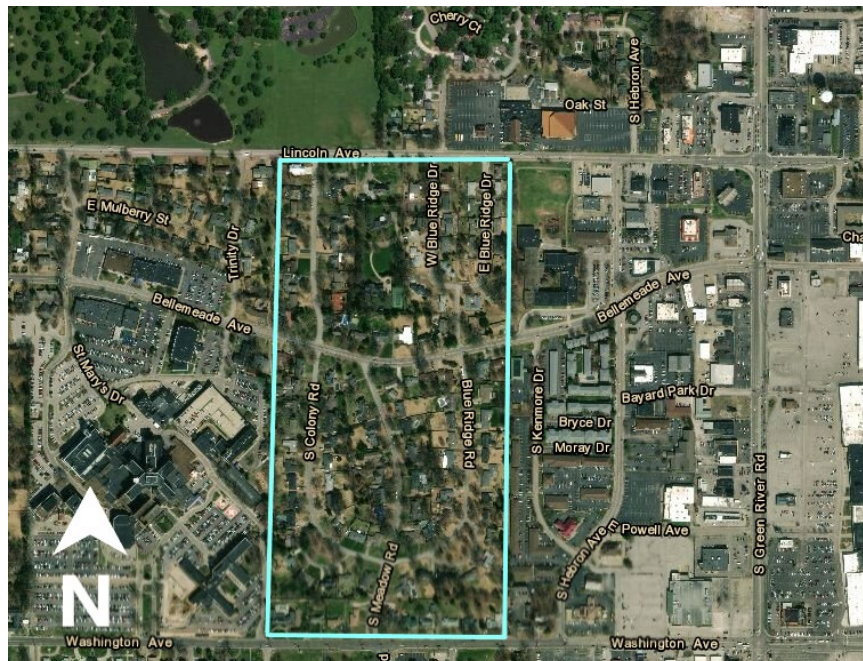


1. PROPERTY INFORMATION

Subdivision: Hebron Meadow

City: Evansville

Streets: Blue Ridge Road,
Bellemead
Avenue, S. Meadow
Road, S. Colony
Road, Washington
Avenue



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2. HOUSING STOCK

No. of Units: 100-150

Construction Date(s): c. 1948-1960

Primary Styles/Forms: Linear Ranch

Secondary Styles/Forms: Colonial Revival; Contemporary

Stories: 1-2

Garages: Attached, carport

Porches: partial-width porches

Common Original Material(s):

Wood windows; wood doors; brick veneer, stone veneer, wood siding

Common Alterations:

Installation of replacement windows and doors;
Installation of vinyl siding

Other Details/Additional Narrative:

The majority of houses in the development exhibit varying Ranch forms, primarily the Linear Ranch. Many houses exhibit Colonial Revival elements, primarily in the form of porch columns, fenestration, or decorative elements such as quoins. Several Contemporary-style houses are located in the neighborhood, and many of the houses in the neighborhood are architect designed. While most houses retain original elements such as doors and windows, several exhibit replacement windows, doors, and siding.

3. DESIGN AND LAYOUT

Street Plan: Curvilinear

Associated Non-residential Elements: Crescent-shaped green spaces are located at Blue Ridge and Colony Roads; Hebron Elementary School is located just to the east of Hebron Meadows

Landscaping Features: Meadow Road is a boulevard from Washington Avenue to Blue Ridge/Colony Roads

Lot Shape:

Setback:

Curbs:

Utilities:

Street lights:

Sidewalks:

Other Details/Additional Narrative:

Hebron Meadow was developed with a curvilinear street arrangement incorporating green spaces at Blue Ridge and Colony Roads. Designated as parks on the original plats, these areas are passive space with mature trees. All houses are set on large lots with wide, manicured lawns. Most back yards are enclosed with fencing.

4. HISTORY/SIGNIFICANCE

Original Plat: 1948

Addition(s):

Developer(s): Wilbur Harrell, Isabella Sullivan

Architect(s): Bob Knapp, Charlie Werry

Builder(s): --

Engineer(s):

Landscape Architect(s): --

Narrative:

The property qualifies as a Custom Development within the MPDF Residential Planning & Development in Indiana. Its gently curving street pattern, and high degree of individualization in housing design are key traits of the Custom Development type seen in Hebron Meadows. Additionally, several houses were designed by local architects for specific clients. Potential criteria and areas of significance are A/community planning & development, ethnic heritage and C/architecture.

Plans for a new subdivision in vicinity of the State Hospital grounds between Lincoln and Washington Avenues had been in discussion prior to World War II but no progress was made until after the war; the first portion of Hebron Meadow was approved in 1948. The subdivision was the product of Wilbur R. Harrell, working with Isabella Sullivan. Intended as an upper middle-class neighborhood, property values were protected by restrictions that set minimum standards for construction, including, for example, lot frontage and square footage. Homes within the neighborhood averaged between \$15,000 and \$25,000.

The neighborhood has a locally significant collection of Modern-style houses. While some homes were built by the developer as part of the original development, many lots were sold to owners who arranged for the construction of their own custom-built residence. The neighborhood became home to many upper middle-class Jewish residents in the 1950s, many of which coordinated with Evansville's leading architects of the period in the design of their home. Such architects included, for example, Ralph Robert (Bob) Knapp, John Hironimus, and Gerald Huber. Other homes were designed by craftsman-builder Charlie Werry, who designed many homes throughout Evansville for Kight Lumber Company. The home at 800 S Colony Road was a Better Homes and Gardens Home of the Year. Locally prominent builders and architects continued to work in Hebron Meadows into the 1960s and 70s.

5. PHOTO KEY AND ADDITIONAL PHOTOGRAPHS





Photo 1: Streetscape view of E. Blue Ridge Drive, facing north



Photo 2: Streetscape view of Blue Ridge Drive from Bellemeade Avenue, facing north



Photo 3: Streetscape view of Blue Ridge Road from Bellemeade Avenue, facing south



Photo 4: View of 710 Blue Ridge Road, facing east



Photo 5: Streetscape view of Blue Ridge Road, facing south



Photo 6: View of 911 S. Colony Road, facing southwest